

Remarks

This Reply should be entered after Final Rejection because it reduces the issues for Appeal.

Reconsideration of this Application is respectfully requested.

Claims 18-28 are pending, with claim 18 being the sole independent claim. Based on the following remarks, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider all outstanding rejections and that they be withdrawn.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Claims 18, 19, and 21-28 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) ("103") as being unpatentable over WO Patent No. WO 98/28644 to Schultz ("Schultz") (using U.S. Patent No. 6,366,410 as a translated document) in view of U.S. Published Patent Application No. 2003/0053218 to Fujimoto ("Fujimoto"). Claim 20 was rejected under 103 as being unpatentable over Schultz in view of Fujimoto, further in view of U.S. Published Patent Application No. 2002/0036832 to Schultz ("Schultz PPA"). Applicant respectively traverses these rejections.

Claim 18 recites at least a third lens group consisting of a single lens.

The Examiner admits that Schultz lacks specific reference to the third lens group containing only one lens, and relies on Fujimoto to allegedly teach the use of a third lens group containing a single lens. However, Fujimoto clearly teaches in the abstract and paragraphs 0032, 0047, and 0091, as well as in Figures 1-4, that a third lens unit has two cemented lens components comprised of two lens elements. Fujimoto does not teach or suggest having a single lens element in the third lens unit. Applicants use a single lens element in a third lens group, for example, to reduce an amount of material, which reduces a cost of materials, needed to produce a desired optical effect (see, e.g., paragraphs 8 and 26 of the instant specification). Fujimoto's third lens unit has two lenses and requires the same amount of optical material as two lenses to perform a desired optical function. Schultz II is not used to teach this feature, and does not cure the deficiencies of Shultz in view of Fujimoto.

Therefore, none of the applied references taken either alone or in combination teach or suggest at least this feature of claim 18. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw the rejections. Also, at least based on their dependency, claims 19-28 should also be found allowable.

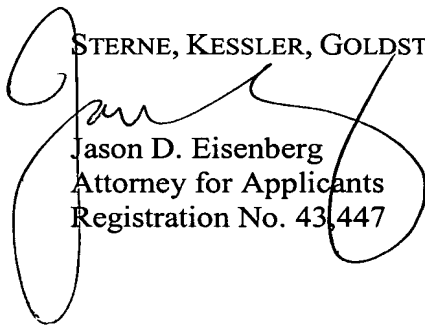
Conclusion

All of the stated grounds of rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicants therefore respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider all presently outstanding rejections and that they be withdrawn. Applicants believe that a full and complete reply has been made to the outstanding final Office Action and, as such, the present application is in condition for allowance. If the Examiner believes, for any reason, that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the number provided.

Prompt and favorable consideration of this Amendment and Reply is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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